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New Buffalo Times

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PHOTO OF NORTH WHITTAKER STREET IN NEW BUFFALO ALL DECKED OUT FOR CHRISTMAS BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

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Local church team up for food pantry effort

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

A community partner has given a big boost to a burgeoning local food pantry.

Recently, the New Buffalo Yacht Club did a matching gift between its members and the yacht club itself and raised $2,100 to purchase items for the food pantry at Water's Edge United Methodist Church in New Buffalo.

Deborah Schmidt, a member of the church who spearheads the pantry effort, said the gift was "very generous."

"We were so appreciative of that because we were right at the time where we really needed some help," she said.

Having started this past April, the pantry is located in a back room in the church. Items there are placed in a structure outside that's similar to a Free Little Library "only bigger," Scmidt said. The pantry has been supported by the church congregation. Members bring an item every Sunday when they come to church.

"But our congregation is small and I knew we needed more help than what we could give," Schmidt said, adding that she was going through $40-$50 a day in food and finds the pantry almost empty every morning.

She approached the yacht club and asked if they'd consider doing something to support the pantry.

Jennifer Cress-Castillo, the community engagement representative at the yacht club, said they've been seeking more opportunities for community outreach.

Deborah Schmidt stands by the Little Food Pantry outside Water's Edge

"The New Buffalo Yacht Club is very excited about increasing our positive presence within our community...We look forward to more opportunities to serve and contribute to the prosperity of Harbor Country," she said.

Schmidt said she'd been thinking about having a food pantry in this area of town for awhile.

She was approached by Neighbor by Neighbor, asking if they'd consider having one because a lot of their clients live near the church.

Schmidt said she thought up the idea for a Little Food Pantry, which is filled once a day, in front of the church.

"And then people don't have to just come when the church is open and then the real beauty of that is that people can come for what they need without the stigma of having to ask for help because that is an issue in this area," she said.

Pastor Kel Penny said it instills a sense of independence in people who use it.

"Our goal was to alleviate hunger but to also do it in such a way that people would not have to feel ashamed or guilt for using the pantry...They are in full control of what they take when they take it and there are notes within the panty that if they require more assistance that when they come back they can speak to us on their own terms," he said.

The phone numbers for further assistance are for long term help for those who need it, Schmidt said.

"They may need more than a can of soup or packet of tuna but immediately we can give them a box of cereal and a can of soup and packet of tuna and they can find more help if they need it," she said.

In addition to nonperishable food items, the pantry also consists of hygiene items such as toilet paper and soap, and even toothbrushes. Wipes were recommended by Neighbor by Neighbor for people who may not have access to running water.

Those who want to donate items can drop off items in the mornings Monday through Thursday and Sunday at the church at 18732 Harbor Country Drive. There's also a drop-off location at New Buffalo Township Library.

Those who want to give financially can do so under Bridge the Gap in the dropdown menu at the church's website, www.h2oedge.org.

You're not anonymous. *— Dino N. Fatouros*

Local Government Meetings

New Buffalo Times

Democracy Requires Transparency

CITY OF NEW BUFFALO
JOHN HUMPHREY, MAYOR
CITY COUNCIL
MARK ROBERTSON, ROGER LIJESKI, JOHN HUMPHREY, BRIAN FLANAGAN, VANCE PRICE
City Council meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:30PM
CITY OF NEW BUFFALO PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 5:30PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP BOARD
PETE RAHM, MICHELLE HEIT, JUDY H. ZABICKI, PATTY IAZZETTO, JACK ROGERS
Board meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 4PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM
SHERIFF BERRIEN COUNTY
L. Paul Bailey, Sheriff
Chuck Heit, Undersheriff
NEW BUFFALO AREA RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY
Meets at 10AM on the 2nd Wednesday of every other month (odd) at New Buffalo Township Hall, 17425 Red Arrow Highway New Buffalo
NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS BOARD
LISA WERNER, JOHN HASKINS, DENISE CHURCHILL, BRADLEY BURNER, VANESSA THUN, STEPHEN DONNELLY, GREG VOSBERG
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP BOARD
DAVID BUNTE, PAULA DUDIAK, LIZ RETTIG, RICHARD SULLIVAN, BILL MARSKE
Chikaming Board meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30PM
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month at 6:30PM
THREE OAKS
THREE OAKS TOWNSHIP BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7PM

VILLAGE OF THREE OAKS BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7PM
GRAND BEACH
Meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7PM
MARY ROBERTSON, CLERK
HARRY WALDER BLAKE O'HALLORAN, JAMES BRACEWELL, PETER DOERR, EDWARD BRANDES

MICHIANA
VILLAGE OF MICHIANA COUNCIL
Meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at 1PM

More new housing for booming LaPorte

BY STAN MADDUX

There appears to be no end to what could be viewed as a housing boom in LaPorte.

The city council approved an agreement with the developer to extend water and sewer lines to a more than 30 acre wooded parcel, where construction of over 100 homes is planned, Monday, Dec. 4.

The site annexed into the city last year is on Park St. near the Thomas Rose Industrial Park on the city's northeast side.

New housing was a high priority for Mayor Tom Dermody during his first term in office and that hasn't changed for his next four years beginning Jan. 1.

The city council approved an agreement with the developer to extend water and sewer lines to a more than 30 acre wooded parcel, where construction of over 100 homes is planned, Monday, Dec. 4.

One of his strategies for growth in the city is updating a housing stock built primarily before 1940 with new homes at all price levels.

Dermody said just 20% of existing homes were constructed since 1980.

"We got a lot more work to do but housing, housing, housing is here," he said.

The developer, Park Street Community, LLC, plans to build 118 town homes and 19 more traditional single-family dwellings, with a current estimated price range from $340,000 to $405,000 apiece.

LaPorte Economic Advancement Partnership Executive Director Bert Cook said close to a dozen homes will likely go up at a time over a period of years beginning in 2024.

Construction of more homes will probably begin once the completed ones are sold, he said.

Cook said the current demand from people wanting to live in LaPorte has probably existed for several decades.

However, he said lack of housing options caused by very little construction of new residences drove many of those would be residents to other communities with a greater selection of newer dwellings.

Some of the people wanting to live here but went elsewhere have been with new companies that came to LaPorte.

"We have to continue to find ways of bringing new product to the market. This project does exactly that," he said.

Since 2020, the new housing completed includes The Banks consisting of 200 resort type apartments near Clear Lake and several town homes priced at more than $700,000 apiece beside Fish Trap Lake.

Roughly 40 affordable units inside the once condemned Monroe St. Apartments building downtown have been restored and modernized.

Low to mid-priced homes are currently going up at the former Tibma Bakery site on Woodward and on 18th streets across from Kesling Middle School.

More new housing continues to be added to the existing Whispering Pines subdivision along Indiana 4 on the city's southeast side.

Right now, the city is soliciting bids from developers to construct more than 100 upscale homes along the municipally owned Beechwood Golf Course starting next year.

The results of a study released nearly a year ago recommended the city add more than 900 homes for ownership and over 750 rental units over the next few years.

The study also pointed to a need to renovate some of the existing residential structures.

Cook said a lot of work remains but the newly approved development noticeably moves the needle toward achieving the new housing goal.

"This is easily one of the largest residential developments that has occurred in LaPorte in probably the last 40 years, probably longer than that," he said.

I am the state.
— Louis XIV

HIKERS PLAN HIKE AT WARREN DUNES STATE PARK

The Harbor Country Hikers will walk the trails of Warren Dunes State Park starting at 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 16.

Noting the calming effect of winter in the wild, hike leader and Hikers President Pat Fisher will lead the group down Whitetail Trail and several other favorites from among Warren Dunes' six miles of trails.

Fisher advises those who plan to take the 1.8 mi. hike to dress for the weather, wear sturdy shoes or boots, and bring plenty of water. Physical difficulty of this hike is rated moderate, partly for some uphill climbs on packed sand.

Though membership is preferred, all are welcome to join the Hikers for this event.

For more information, including directions to the parking lot, visit www.harborcountryhikers.com or Harbor Country Hikers on Facebook. — STAFF REPORTS

NEW BUFFALO SCHOLARSHIP PAGEANT TOY DRIVE AT ROMA'S PIZZA

The Miss and Mr. New Buffalo Scholarship Pageant is inviting the community to eat, meet the 2024 New Buffalo Royal Court, wear an ugly sweater for an "Ugly Sweater Contest" and sing some karaoke at their annual Christmas toy drive for New Buffalo Area Schools at Roma's Pizza at 5:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 15.

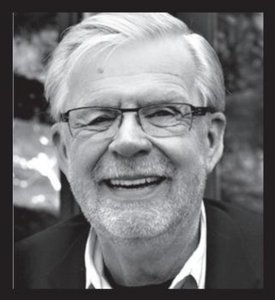
Guests are invited to bring an unwrapped toy or gift card for a teen. Toys will be delivered to the school Monday, Dec. 18.

Roma's Pizza is located at 17600 Red Arrow Highway in New Buffalo. — STAFF REPORTS

SPORTS

From the Bleachers

COLUMN BY KURT MARGGRAF IN CHICAGO



I believe that someone has a theory that the older one gets, the quicker time flies by.

When you're 10, a year is 10 percent of your life but by the time you turn 50, it's only two percent. Of course if that were really true, every minute would go by faster and we know that isn't true.

Anyway, it seems like yesterday that 2023 began, and now, in a few short weeks, the year will be coming to an end. So let's recap the year, in Chicago, in sports.

Let's start with hockey. The Blackhawks, on the ice, were pretty dismal. The off season was much kinder, and they were able to land Connor Bedard, the number one pick in the draft.

Bedard, only 18, is going to be a superstar, and the Hawks will be contenders within a couple of years. Recently, one of the players they got to help mentor Bedard messed up and, while we don't know exactly what happened, he was let go. Hopefully, next year will be the beginning of years of excellence.

The Bulls decided to keep the team together for one more year to see if they could put together a playoff run. The results, so far, have been disappointing. They have a bunch of good players, and a good coach, but they can't figure out how to put their egos aside and play together as a team or maybe they have a bunch of players with similar skill sets. Whatever it is, it isn't working and it seems to be time to blow it all up and start over again.

Speaking of starting over again, the White Sox had a horrible year and, like the Bulls, will be making a lot of trades and beginning another rebuild. They have some really good players, so maybe they can trade themselves back into contention.

The Cubs had a better year than most expected, but fell short of the playoffs. Surprisingly, they fired David Ross because one of the best managers in baseball, Craig Counsel, was available. Since then, speculation has been rampant that they will go all in on the best free agents this year. The winter meetings are underway, and hopefully there will be some clarity soon.

The Bears have had an interesting year. The off season seemed so productive that when the regular season started, the Bears, and their fans, felt they were ready to compete for a playoff berth.

In many ways they have fallen far short of expectations, but as the season has progressed, most of the blame has landed on the shoulders of the coaching staff and the quarterback. Both have shown improvement in the second half of the season and it will be very interesting to see if the Bears decide to retain them or move on. Hopefully, next year will be more positive for all the Chicago teams.

Terry Wogan said, "Time flies like an arrow - but fruit flies like a banana."

Be kind. Talk to you next week. Peace, love, and happiness.

Everytime I changed my oil I always dig a little hole and lay it in peacefully and say RIP little dinosaurs... — *Sean Strickland*

Lady Bison hoopsters lose season opener

BY STAN MADDUX

The New Buffalo High School girls' basketball team opened the season at home Tuesday, Dec. 5, with a loss to Michigan Lutheran.

The varsity squad with five freshmen were defeated 39 to 7.

The Titans were leading 16-0 in the second quarter when the Lady Bison scored on a three point shot by freshman Laney Strother.

It wasn't long before New Buffalo scored again on a 10 foot bank shot by freshmen Allyson Cardenas.

The Lady Bison seemed to feed off the energy from the quick scores but there was no let up from the talented and fundamentally sound Titans, whose 20-5 halftime lead grew by another 10 points going into the fourth quarter.

Head Coach Rich Knoll said his young team with just two seniors has some learning to do about the game to play more effectively at the varsity level.

Knoll said the goal is for the team to improve with each game.

"They're going to be fine. They play hard," he said.

A bright spot for the Lady Bison was the play of Strother, who showed her ability to handle the ball at point guard and potential to be an effective long range shooter.

"We're going to put a lot on her shoulders and, hopefully, she can bare the weight of it," he said.

Bison start the basketball season winless

BY STAN MADDUX

The New Buffalo High School boys' basketball team stayed within striking distance until the fourth quarter in a 73-48 loss at home Tuesday, Dec. 5, to Michigan Lutheran.

The Bison trailed by just 10 points at halftime against the taller, more talented Titans helped by numerous unforced turnovers.

New Buffalo Head Coach Nate Tripp said his team also killed itself with unexcused turnovers in the season opening 60-54 loss Dec. 1 at Eau Claire.

"We're throwing the ball away. We're killing ourselves," he said.

The Titans jumped out to 7-0 lead but the Bison scored eight of the next 12 points on buckets from seniors Andres Becera and Elliot Bourne.

The Bison pulled to within 13-11 on a three-point shot from Bourne, but that's as close as they would get to the Titans.

Michigan Lutheran led by nine points until the first quarter ended with sophomore Lucas Forker turning an offensive rebound into a bucket at the buzzer.

The Titans, whose trapping defense at times gave the Bison trouble, extended their lead to 13 points in the second quarter until Becera nailed a three-point shot from the baseline.

A short time later, Becera dribbled the ball the full length of the court for a lay-up.

New Buffalo started the fourth quarter trailing by 49-36 but the Titans hitting wide open shooters with long passes outscored the Bison 18-5 during the final six minutes of the game.

The Bison also hurt themselves with poor free throw shooting.

Becera led the Bison with 21 points.

Bourne had eight points while Forker contributed six points.

The Bison had the lead at one point against Eau Claire after waging a comeback but the Beavers pulled away in the final minutes.

Tripp found it difficult to explain why his team of mostly sophomores has struggled with turnovers and free throw shooting after winning some of their off-season games during the summer.

"It's not translating right now. Why that is, I don't know. We got to go back to the film and keep dissecting it," he said.

At some point, though, he expects the team to start making fewer mistakes.

"They are great kids with a lot of energy and will only get better," he said.

Members of Rotary Blanket Project deliver warmth, comfort to the community

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Volunteers with The Rotary Club of Harbor Country Blanket Project have been delivering handmade blankets to those who are in need of something to snuggle up with for warmth and comfort.

Volunteers distributed blankets to firefighters at the Three Oaks Township Fire Department Sunday, Dec. 3.

Rita Watson, a Rotarian who spearheads the blanket effort, said that she's been making blankets and distributing them for years at the Ronald McDonald House in South Bend through the First Mates at the New Buffalo Yacht Club.

"But when I joined the Harbor Country Rotary, I thought it'd be nice to give appreciation for the people that serve the community and give up their time in their lives," she said.

Last year, the group distributed blankets to the Three Oaks Township Police Department and paramedics, as well as other area fire departments and the senior center. Blankets were also slipped into 50 food baskets that Rotarians gave to families in need at Christmastime in the school districts.

Material for this year's set of blankets for the 17 firefighters was specially ordered, as the material contained Dalmatians on it.

Watson has a special appreciation for firefighters, she said.

"My dad was the fire chief in Channahon, Illinois, and I used to volunteer out there," she said.

The previous week, the group had thrown a party for the residents of Westwood Nursing Home in Bridgman, where 75 blankets were distributed.

This week, Watson said she was scheduled to bring 150-200 baby blankets to the Ronald McDonald House. About 20 dog blankets were also delivered to the Michiana Humane Society, and they're now requesting some blankets for the cats.

For the Ronald McDonald House, Watson said that little blankets, which are all different, will be given for the children along with stuffed animals, with blankets being given to parents. She's also made hats and little jackets for infants that open in the front.

To buy the material for this year's blankets, the Rotary gave her $1,000 and the yacht club gave her $500. One person who won the club's chili cook-off gave her his winnings, which was $450, and a neighbor gave her $150.

"Those blankets (the large ones), that material is $12 a yard and it took five yards," she said, adding she usually searches for deals on material.

Usually, a group of 11 volunteers meets at Three Oaks Township Library to tie the blankets.

Chris Zebell, who's on the Three Oaks Township Library Board, said she walked in one day and was invited to join them: "Well, come on down!"

A couple of men from The Rotary Club have also joined them. Once, a father brought his two homeschooled children to help.

Attached to each blanket is a tag, which lists the names of who made it.

Those who want to join the blanket-making effort can visit the library from 2-4 p.m. every Tuesday from the fall through the spring.

While they're making them, members of the group say they swap stories as well as "talk a lot about eating."

"It really is a nice group - I'm so glad I got myself into it," Zebell said.

Rita Watson holds a dog blanket with Michiana Humane Society Executive Director Johanna Humbert

Blankets, hats and jackets are ready to be delivered to Ronald McDonald House

Three Oaks firefighters display a blanket from one of the many that were delivered Sunday

Co-Alliance investing in facility serving farmers

BY STAN MADDUX

Farmers in parts of northern Indiana and southwest Michigan should be served better from a $6.6 million expansion of a Co-Alliance fertilizer hub.

Work has begun on refurbishing and expanding the fertilizer portion of the plant in Union Mills after the LaPorte County Council last week unanimously approved a five-year tax abatement on the project.

The goal is for the work to be completed in the fall of 2024, said Paul Wolfe, who's overseeing the project as the Region 4 Agronomy Manager for Indianapolis based Co-Alliance.

"This is a tight time line to get this completed," he said.

Co-Alliance is a farmer owner cooperative with about 80 facilities serving growers in Indiana, southern Michigan and western Ohio by providing fertilizer and grain storage along with agronomy services.

The project strictly involves the fertilizer portion of the plant at 3551 W. 800 South.

Wolfe said the existing facility with a capacity to store 24,000 tons of fertilizer will be refurbished and added onto to store another 9,000 tons of fertilizer.

The fertilizer mixing equipment inside the existing tower will be replaced with state of the art mixing technology capable of doing things that can't be done by the current system and at a faster pace.

For example, Wolfe said different products will allowed to be mixed into the fertilizer ingredients for offering more nutrient varieties.

He said the new system will also be able to feed each of the storage bays independently, a time saver for making available freshly mixed product.

Three storage bays will also be added to the existing six storage bays

"We're just going to replace that mixing system with one that will allow us to be more efficient and use products we cannot use today," he said.

Wolfe said the new technology will also allow trucks hauling 24 tons of fertilizer to the plant to be unloaded a little quicker than the "five to six minutes" it takes presently.

The Union Mills facility is one of four fertilizer hubs Co-Alliance uses to distribute soil nutrients farmers can purchase at five of its branches in LaPorte County, Porter County, Argos and Buchanan, Michigan.

Amy Kinsler, Vice-President of Sales and Marketing for Co-Alliance, called the investment critical for keeping up with the future by eliminating delays that can occur in farmers receiving product exactly when they need it.

She said farmers need fertilizer sooner nowadays because of modern technology allowing them to plant and harvest quicker.

As a result, Kinsler said it's gradually become more challenging to provide them with crop nutrients at the moment it's needed, though, under the current processing system.

Co-Alliance is a farmer owner cooperative with about 80 facilities serving growers in Indiana, southern Michigan and western Ohio by providing fertilizer and grain storage along with agronomy services.

"This is that investment to allow us to make sure we're not holding them up when it comes to harvest and planting," she said.

Wolfe said the plant in Union Mills has a separate facility with a capacity to store up to about three million bushels of grain, which is about average for a Co-Alliance facility.

Currently, Co-Alliance has about 25 other ongoing projects at its facilities in all three states, said Ryan Satchell, capital asset manager for the cooperative.

He said all of the projects based on the needs of farmers in each of their service areas are different than what's occurring at Union Mills and they vary from large to small in size.

"We're constantly looking at really understanding from our customer base, which is our members, what their needs are and how we can continue to reinvest in our business to support that," Satchell said.

Matt Reardon, director for the LaPorte County Office of Economic Development, applauded the decision to grant tax abatement.

Reardon said existing businesses might not always provide a home run in terms of job creation but they definitely contribute to the health of local economies particularly in rural areas.

"These are the blocking, tackling kinds of activities that help make local governments successful. $6.6 million is not insignificant," he said.

Co-Alliance has about 20 employees in Union Mills, with a handful of those working in the fertilizer division.

LOCAL INTELLIGENCE New Buffalo Times — SINCE 1942 —

Back By Popular Demand: Mammogram Marathon helps more women receive breast cancer screenings

Due to the community's positive response to last year's Mammogram Marathon (Mammothon for short) event, Northwest Health – La Porte hosted a Mammothon at the hospital.

During this special event, woman age 40 or older received their annual screening mammogram and were also offered a bit of extra pampering with complimentary snacks and mini-manicures. The hospital called women who have been too busy to schedule their screening and the mammogram technologists extended their hours to accommodate them.

"We know that mammograms are the best method to detect breast cancer early, when it's easier to treat," said Matthew Shebel, director of diagnostic imaging. "Today, thanks to early detection and treatment advances, more women are surviving breast cancer and living longer, healthier lives."

For women of average risk, the American College of Radiology recommends annual mammograms starting at age 40, with no upper limit as long as the woman is in good health. Different guidelines apply to women at higher risk.

Northwest Health – La Porte is nationally recognized as a Breast Center of Excellence by the American College of Radiology (ACR). The ACR represents the highest level of image quality and patient safety. According to the ACR, the hospital's breast imaging services are fully accredited including mammography, stereotactic breast biopsy, breast ultrasound, breast MRI and ultrasound-guided breast biopsy.

To learn more about scheduling your mammogram at Northwest Health – La Porte, call 844-865-7459. — STAFF REPORTS

New Buffalo author pens animal rescue story

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Linda Stone relaxes with Bubbles (right) and Teddy

While you wouldn't know it if you met her today, Bubbles the dog has had many troubles.

Linda Stone, who owns City Flowers in New Buffalo Township, said that, upon first meeting Bubbles at the Northwest Indiana Humane Society in Gary, burrs were caked in her legs.

"She came here from the dog catcher and she was just covered in burrs - the dog groomer can't get them out of her legs, she shaved her back but they're too into her skin" was what Stone was told at the shelter.

Years later, Bubbles is living with Stone and her brother, Teddy, in a comfortable home - and is the star of her own children's book.

Written by Stone, "Bubbles' Troubles" traces Bubbles' journey from wandering the streets to being scooped up by a loving owner while residing at a shelter.

Stone said she didn't intend to adopt Bubbles, as she was eyeing another dog on Petfinder; however, when she arrived at the shelter, she discovered that dog was getting adopted.

She was then asked if she wanted to see another dog there.

"I looked in and, way in the very back, is Bubbles," Stone said.

At first, Bubbles was a growling dog who resisted being touched. But Stone kept returning, bringing treats and walking her on a leash. Once, Stone got permission to take Bubbles on a car ride. She took her to McDonald's, where she broke off pieces of hamburger to feed to Bubbles.

"She was inching closer to me and finally, she gave me a kiss," Stone said.

A few months later, before the pandemic hit in 2020, Bubbles chose her brother: Teddy, a Lhasa Apso from Camp Canine in Mishawaka, Indiana.

A believer in divine intervention, Stone said it was almost 20 years ago when she had a dream to first open a flower shop.

"I don't hardly ever remember my nighttime dreams...If I have one that I remember, it's a life-changing event," Stone, who used to own Ramberg's Bakery in Union Pier, said.

Recently, she had a dream that she wrote a book about Bubbles, with profits going toward animal shelters.

"I just sat down one day with paper and a pencil and said, 'Okay, God, you gave me this dream, you have to help me write it,'" Stone said.

The writing process took a couple months. The book's written in rhyme, which has its own set of challenges.

"It has to do with how many syllables so it flows and sometimes, I'd have to go back and tweak some of the wording for the syllables," Stone said.

She was hooked up with Matthew Smith, an associate graphic designer at New York Festivals, to illustrate the book through Ellen Smith, who used to live in the area but now lives in North Carolina and owns a graphic design company.

Through email, Stone gave Smith pictures of Bubbles, who's a Shih-Tzu.

The book was self-published through Excel Book Writing, a hybrid publishing company that offers different packages. Currently, the book is available on Amazon and Barnes and Noble, as well as bubblesandteddy.com. Through the marketing package, the books may be in stores such as Walmart, Meijer and Target beginning early next year.

"Their database has over 40,000 locations - not to say all those locations are going to carry it, it's up to those stores," Stone said.

Another book will be published soon: "Teddy Spaghetti." Stone said she wrote the book for her great niece, who loves Teddy. The title was "Teddy Loves Betty" until her 15-year-old brother declared "No, it's got to be 'Teddy Spaghetti!'"

The title fits, as Teddy really loves spaghetti. Unbeknownst to those who named her at the shelter, Bubbles loves water and will pop soap bubbles that are drifting through the air.

More stories are in the pipeline: "Bubbles and Teddy: Fun on the Run" is next and will be followed by "Bubbles and Teddy Rule the School."

Stone said that she hopes the book instills in readers the importance of animal rescue. For a minimum of $1 donation or more that will go directly to the Northwest Indiana Humane Society, people can sign up on bubblesandteddy.com to receive weekly Bubbles updates.

"The story doesn't stay sad and the truth is, many of these animal stories are sad and that's what I hope that this will kind of help," she said.

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Students deck out the city, township hall trees

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Students from New Buffalo Elementary School trooped over to New Buffalo City and Township halls to deck the trees out in handmade ornaments Monday, Dec. 4.

As a reward for their generosity, students were given bags full of treats as well as the chance to play some Christmas-themed games, such as a Reindeer Antler Toss and a snowball toss.

Students do an activity after decorating the city hall tree

Students deck out the New Buffalo City Hall tree

Students deck out the New Buffalo Township Hall tree

Students engaged in an activity after decking out the township hall tree

Students played competitive holiday games at New Buffalo Township Hall

Students play holiday themed games at New Buffalo Township Hall

Students play holiday games at New Buffalo Township Hall

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The Greek Museum, housed at the Annunciation and St. Paraskevi Greek Orthodox Church features the exhibit The Greeks of Berrien County, Michigan
PHOTO BY ELAINE THOMOPOULOS

Orthodox Philanthropic Society members Marie Sinioris, Pitsa Arvan, Liilian Casten, Eleni Edison, Tina Sarantos and Marina Sheerin
PHOTO BY ELAINE THOMOPOULOS

Baklava
PHOTO BY ALEXANDER FATOUROS

Sivota, Lefkada island in Greece
PHOTO BY ALEXANDER FATOUROS

A private beach once owned by Aristotle Onassis and frequented by Jackie Onassis on the island of Skorpios in the Ionian Sea near Lefkada
PHOTO BY ALEXANDER FATOUROS

Honey-dipped Melomakarona cookies
PHOTO BY ELAINE THOMOPOULOS

Kourambiedes and other bakery treats
PHOTO BY ALEXANDER FATOUROS

Koulouria, Greek butter cookies
PHOTO BY ELAINE THOMOPOULOS

Aphrodite in Nydri, Greece
PHOTO BY ALEXANDER FATOUROS

Traditional Greek coffee prepared in a briki—pairs wonderfully with buttery Koulouria
PHOTO BY ALEXANDER FATOUROS

Greek Christmas shortbread cookies Kourambiedes
PHOTO BY ALEXANDER FATOUROS

Tavérna on Hydra island, Greece
PHOTO BY ALEXANDER FATOUROS

Baking for Philanthropy

GREEK HOLIDAY BAKE SALE ON

BY ALEXANDER FATOUROS

Embark on a culinary adventure at the annual holiday Greek bake sale—a delightful celebration of authentic Greek flavors and traditions. The social affair occurs from noon to 4 pm (ET) on Friday, December 15, Saturday, December 16, and Sunday, December 17 at the Annunciation and Agia Paraskevi Greek Orthodox Church in New Buffalo, Michigan, 18000 Behner Road.

Indulge in rich, decadent pastries such as chocolate-dipped baklava, or savor the savory delight of spanakopita, a traditional spinach and feta strudel. At the heart of the bake sale lies the concept of φιλοξενία (philoxenia), a profound Greek virtue that embodies hospitality and welcoming strangers as friends.

The Orthodox Philanthropic Society will present a well-choreographed lineup of scrumptious treats. From the rich layers of baklava to the cream-filled Galaktoboureko, each delicacy is a culinary delight of textures and flavors not to be missed.

Other must-orders include the classic Greek Christmas shortbread cookies Kourambiedes, which are dusted with powdered sugar, the buttery Koulouria, the honey-dipped Melomakarona, and the Paximadia, a Greek biscotti perfect for dipping in coffee or tea.

The Greek holiday bake sale extends beyond indulging your taste buds; it's an opportunity to support a worthy cause in Berrien County. A portion of the proceeds will be generously donated to the Cora Lamping Center, a local organization dedicated to empowering women and children. The Orthodox Philanthropic Society also contributes to the River Valley Senior Center transportation fund and the River Valley Middle School service projects.

While savoring the delectable treats, take the opportunity to explore the Greek Museum, housed within the church. The exhibit "The Greeks of Berrien County, Michigan," which was funded in part by the Michigan Humanities Council, an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities chronicles the rich history and contributions of the Greek-American community in the region.

Developed by The Berrien County Historical Association and curated by "History of Greece" author and "Modern Greece" editor Elaine Thomopoulos, Ph.D., the immersive exhibit showcases a captivating blend of stunning artifacts, colorful handcrafted textiles, and compelling stories.

Holiday concert highlights the sounds of the season

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

The sounds of the season permeated the Episcopal Church of the Mediator in Harbert during the Harbor Country Singers' holiday concert Saturday, Dec. 2.

Presented by the School of American Music, the concert featured area musicians, including a brass quintet and a piano, guitar and bass trio, as well as a mix of secular and sacred music and Christmas and Hanukkah songs. While the concert was free, guests were encouraged to bring a food item donation for Neighbor by Neighbor, a nonprofit connecting Harbor Country residents to social services.

The concert was directed by Maggie Martin, Harbor Country Singers director, and produced by Pat Putnam.

The Harbor Country Singers sings a variety of Christmas songs

The brass quintet performs

Tom Paris and Joel Cooper strum their guitars

Harbor Country Singers choir sings Christmas songs

Guests sing Silent Night while holding candles

Garth Taylor, School of American Music founder, plays the guitar during Silent Night

Students immersed in music culture during JazzReach visit

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Many of the characteristics of jazz culture are rooted in that of American culture, Lucas Pino, a tenor saxophonist with the New York-based JazzReach, Inc.'s Metta Quintet, said

"As Americans we each have our individual liberties - you can see each of us within the context of a jazz band has a level of autonomy," he said to high school band students at River Valley High School Tuesday, Nov. 28.

In the same way that students, with the exception of some instruction from parents or teachers, aren't told how to act or how to behave, no one was telling each of the respective musicians who were performing that day for the students what to play.

"Yet, we each have a responsibility to the totality of the band," Pino said.

Helping students appreciate music's cultural roots by giving them access to live performances by premiere musicians is the mission of JazzReach, Hans Schuman, founder and executive director, said.

"The mission is pretty simple: To make sure young people have access and exposure to this music on the premise that it's a very important part of our nation's cultural heritage," he said.

Jazz musicians, most of whom are part of the New York jazz scene but some who tour nationally, travel to different performing arts centers and concert halls across the nation. Venues usually have either an education department or director of education, with the goal being getting students to come through the theater.

"We have a touring repertoire of 12 productions and they all have different objectives, they promote different facets of the art form," Schuman said.

More than 500 area students, which included students from the River Valley School District, Bridgman Public Schools and St. Joseph Public Schools, took part in JazzReach's two-day residency at The Acorn, which was Tuesday and Wednesday, Nov. 28-29.

While the younger students heard the Metta Quintet, JazzReach's critically acclaimed resident ensemble, perform their "Hangin' with the Giants" program at The Acorn, the older set interacted with the musicians when they paid a visit to their respective band rooms.

Nikki Gauthier, artistic director of The Acorn, said she'd been working with Dylan McCarthy, JazzReach's director of programming, for the past year to come to the area.

"Obviously it's just for one day but hopefully, it gets them excited and sparks a love of music in someone that leads them maybe into something they would have never thought of before," she said.

Lacey Payne, director of teaching and learning for River Valley, said she also hopes the program has exposed students to something they might not have otherwise experienced.

"Exposing our students to the beauty and complexity of jazz music aligns perfectly with our school's commitment to providing a well-rounded education...We believe that experiences like these not only inspire creativity but also promote cultural understanding and tolerance," she said.

A 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, JazzReach has origins that can be traced to a little bedroom in Brooklyn, New York, 30 years ago.

A graduate of the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Schuman said that he was troubled that art, music and culture is currently missing from the curriculum in schools nationwide.

"There's no regimented, national curriculum that encourages or mandates that young people have access to information about the arts, music and culture...So much a part of the human experience is what we do creatively," he said.

Exposure to music isn't all that's required to spark a passion about it in a child, as said that the enthusiasm of someone - whether they be a teacher or a parent - can also rub off on a potential young musician.

"It could be heavy metal, it could be R & B, hip hop, whatever but somebody has to say, 'Check that out...' If you're meant to do it, it sticks and you become curious in your own right and you seek it out," Schuman said.

Taking up an instrument requires lots of sacrifices - which is why Schuman said it's imperative that young musicians must have access to a teacher ,who can teach them not only an instrument's techniques but also "ensure you're immersed and are getting a lot of information about music itself."

"You need to be willing to go into it on our own and also be so curious you're willing to stay in your room with the door shut and everyone else is out playing or going on dates or whatever and serious people are in their practice room trying to figure it all out," Schuman said.

The Metta Quintet performs for River Valley Elementary School students

(back) Hans Schuman and Adi Meyerson and (front) Lucas Pino and Christopher McBride perform for River Valley Band students

The Metta Quintet performs an evening concert on Tuesday

HOROSCOPE

DECEMBER 7-13, 2023

AS INTERPRETED BY SANDY "STAR" BENDT

ARIES MARCH 21—APRIL 19

You will be getting an extra dose of motivation and your energy levels will brighten, giving you the opportunity to break thru any emotional or spiritual blocks that have kept you from advancing in romantic relationships. This is an excellent time to put an end to rocky relationships and be happy.

TAURUS APRIL 20—MAY 20

Take a break from social events and gatherings this week as quiet time is in order for you. This is a good week for detoxing and focusing on your health and well-being. Create healthy meals, grab your yoga mat and prepare to make a commitment to a healthy happy life-style. Make it a goal.

GEMINI MAY 21—JUNE 21

Your ambition levels are increasing this week and your creativity will be sparked. This is a good time to get noticed publicly for your creative talents. Also, you will be more reactive and responsive this week allowing you to finally notice that you are being sought after romantically.

CANCER JUNE 22—JULY 22

OMG! Are you finally coming out of your shell? Well, if you are it is the right time to attract many admirers and career opportunities. Come out and see that the air has cleared and emotional burdens have lifted. Past relationship issues will be put into perspective freeing you to move forward.

LEO JULY 23—AUGUST 22

Healing and introspection align with home and family this week, giving you that "a-hah" moment when you finally understand a difficult family pattern or a troubled family member. This will bring abundant good vibes into your energy field. You are in a great place to forgive and truly understand.

VIRGO AUGUST 23—SEPTEMBER 22

You will be feeling a little more adventurous this week and may seek out the unusual. You will be taking a break from conventional thinking. Use this energy to invent or create new modes of operating in your career. Be more communicative this week with higher-ups about your inventions.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23—OCTOBER 22

This week you will be more aggressive in your pursuits and your will-power will be rock solid. Whether you desire to be more physically fit or more mentally sharp this is the time to hit it. This is also an excellent time to set career or financial goals. Strike while the iron is hot and it will take you far.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23—NOVEMBER 21

It is time to get serious about taking a break from anything that is causing you stress. Take a good look at what you are worth and how you are treating yourself. Stop controlling every thought and let things just happen as they will. Grab a nice blanket, a hot cup of tea and just relax this week.

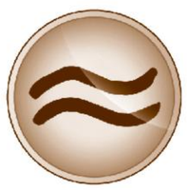
SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22—DECEMBER 21

Associations come under scrutiny and possibly change this week putting a hold on financial plans. It is important you align yourself with people that support your causes. Technology is important now, use it to expand your ideas, increase revenue and attract the right people to your team.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22—JANUARY 19

Even though you might feel that this is a good week to stay home and focus on your nest career opportunities or changes will keep you at work. You will get the go ahead to start projects that will bring in more money and prestige. Collaborative and group efforts are highlighted. Get that cash.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20—FEBRUARY 18



You will get many things accomplished through your imagination now. The need for adventure and faraway places is strong this week too. If you can't get away go, for mental explorations thru books or movies. You may find inspiration for future career changes and ways to earn extra money.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19—MARCH 20

You may experience some friction with colleagues when working on projects or with family members when doing household chores. This will be just the right friction to make creative sparks that get the job done faster. Before you know it, your enthusiasm and excitement will create a master plan.

I don't go to the doctor except when I'm very ill, and when I go to India, I drink a drop of local water. *— Nassim Nicholas Taleb*

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Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.

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			2		3			7
		2	5	8			1	9
								1
5			3		9	4		
		7	4		2			
		1						
		3			1		8	
9	8							2

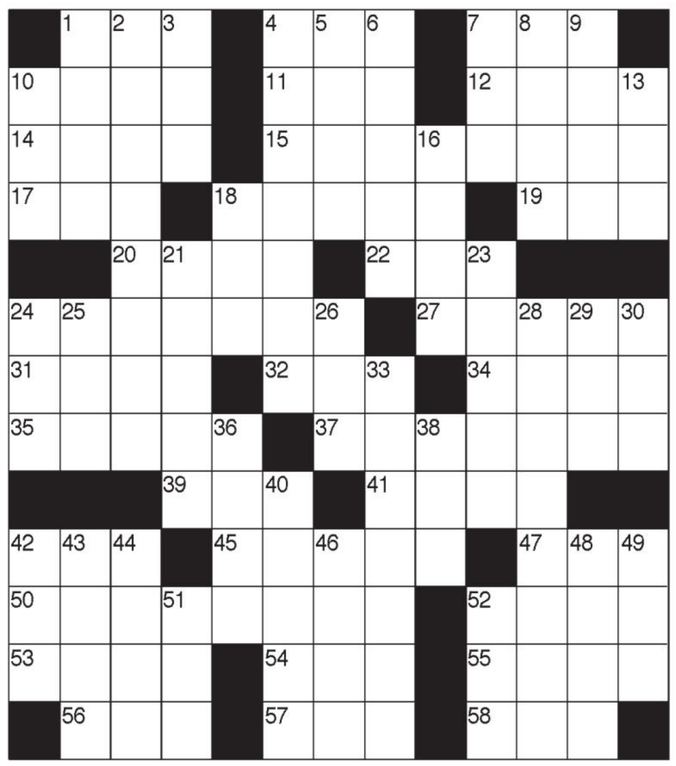
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Tumor (suf.)
4 Amer. Standard Version (abbr.)
7 Amer. Cancer Society (abbr.)
10 Indian red powder
11 Never (Ger.)
12 Manger
14 Oven
15 Denote
17 Amer. Automobile Assn. (abbr.)
18 Chic
19 Wicked
20 Eelworm
22 Under (pref.)
24 High prelate
27 Spine bones
31 Musette
32 Venerable
34 Fetter
35 Wash
37 Goa powder
39 Shak. contraction
41 Sayings (suf.)
42 Barely get by
45 Conduit
47 Exclamation
50 Educated
52 Little: music
53 In the matter of (2 words)
54 Asian gazelle
55 Hall (Ger.)
56 Office of Economic Development (abbr.)
57 Once hip
58 Indiana (abbr.)

DOWN

1 Fetish
2 Husband of Atalanta
3 Scot. alder tree
4 Lively: music
5 Trigonometric function
6 Hindu sacred writings
7 Atl. Coast Conference (abbr.)
8 Crustacean
9 Wife of Ramachandra
10 Also known as (abbr.)
13 Sleeping location
16 Odyssey beggar
18 Small (Scot.)
21 Insect
23 Child (Scot.)
24 For (Sp.)
25 Slugger's stat
26 Guido's note (2 words)
28 Roanoke Island message
29 Dispossess
30 Collection of sayings
33 Sere (2 words)
36 Abstract being
38 Berne's river
40 Father of Abraham
42 Teacher of Samuel
43 Bingolike gambling game
44 To be (Fr.)
46 Alas (Ger.)
48 Cigarfish
49 Bengal people
51 Detective
52 Greek letter



Christmas trees gained popularity nationwide after World War II, This Christmas tree delights patrons at a restaurant in Athens.
PHOTO BY ELAINE THOMOPOULOS

These boats are on display at the Athens Airport.
PHOTO BY ELAINE THOMOPOULOS

Athens delves into the Christmas spirit with colorful decorations.
PHOTO BY CHRISTOPHER THOMOPOULOS

Christmas season in Athens, Greece.
PHOTO BY CHRISTOPHER THOMOPOULOS

How the Holidays are Celebrated in Greece

NOT JUST CHRISTMAS TREES AND SANTA CLAUS

BY ELAINE THOMOPOULOS

I wandered down the crowded sidewalks of Athens, Greece last month. It was 70 degrees on a sunny November 17, with the smell of roasted corn and chestnuts filling the air. The shopkeepers had already decorated their windows in anticipation of the holiday season, which includes Christmas, New Years, and Epiphany. Festive images of Santa Claus and Christmas trees appeared, and a huge, illuminated tree was being installed in the center of Athens, near the Parliament Building.

These symbols of Christmas are not truly Greek, but an import from Western Europe. In 1833, King Otto, the first king of Greece, brought the tradition of a Christmas tree from his native land of Bavaria. The upper classes in Greece started decorating with Christmas trees in the 19th century, but the custom did not get established with the rest of the Greeks nationwide until after World War II.

A long-established custom in Greece, a nation tied to the sea, is the decoration of karavakia (small boats) with lights. Brightly lit boats can be seen throughout Greece, especially in the islands and coastlands. I observed a wooden boat at the entrance to the port of Piraeus, festooned with lights and the flags of many nations, as well as a sparkling display of three small boats in a shop at the Athens Airport.

Santa Claus, with a white beard and a red coat, is present in the stores and decorations that I observed in Athens, but it is not the Santa Claus (or St. Nicholas) we know who distributes presents to Greek children. It is Saint Basil, and the presents are given on New Years Day, which commemorates the date that the saint, who was known for his charitable works, died in 379.

The people of Greece are overwhelmingly Greek Orthodox, and they celebrate the birth of Christ on December 25. This has been true since Greece adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1923. Beginning on November 15, devout Greek Orthodox parishioners follow a religiously based fast, with no meat, fish, dairy products, olive oil, or wine. The fast ends on December 24, followed by a joyous celebration of Christ's birth on December 25.

Christmas includes church services, family gatherings, and a feast that varies throughout Greece. Dishes can include pork, lamb, turkey, or fish. Special treats include a sweet bread called christopsomo and cookies such as kourambiethes,

koulourakia, and melomakarina. Usually on Christmas evening, as well as New Year's Eve, children go door to door, singing kalenda (carols), accompanied by a triangle and/or drums. They are rewarded with a treat and sometimes money. An elderly friend of mine remembers singing the kalenda in the 1950s, after the devastation of World War II and the Greek Civil War. Because the people in his village in the Peloponnese were poor, all he got for his efforts was a walnut.

A week after Christmas, on January 1st, Greeks celebrate St. Basil's name day by attending church services. But they also welcome the new year by gathering on New Year's Eve to play cards. As a child in Elmhurst, Illinois, I witnessed my mom and dad, aunts, and uncles around our dining room table, playing cards with bets of a dime or a quarter. They played until the wee hours of the morning, taking a break at 12 midnight to wish everyone a Happy New Year,

It is on New Year's Day that gifts are exchanged. To greet the New Year, vasilopita, a sweet bread with a coin inside, is sliced by the head of the household and distributed to family and guests. The person who gets the coin usually wears a big smile since this means that good luck awaits. My parents continued this custom in the United States, and it lives on in my own family.

The holiday season comes to a grand finale on Epiphany, January 6th, with the Greek Orthodox celebration of the baptism of Jesus. In the port of Piraeus in Athens, as well as the cold waters of Chicago's Lake Michigan, the Blessing of the Waters ceremony takes place. As soon as the priest tosses a cross into the water, young men dive in. The belief is that the one who breaks through the water with the cross in hand will have good luck.

The folk legend of the kallikantzaroi lingers in the Greek imagination, but no Greek I know ever believed it. They are creatures that live underground and come out on Christmas Day. The descriptions of what they look like vary from region to region, but all of them are scary. The kallikantzaroi stay around until Epiphany, causing mischief, and then disappear until the next year. My friend told me that in Greece his mother would use the threat of the kallikantzaroi to make sure he didn't misbehave.

The delicious pastries mentioned in this article and many others are available at the Holiday Greek Bake Sale sponsored by the Orthodox Philanthropic Society on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, December 15, 16, and 17 from noon to 4 pm ET at the Annunciation and Agia Paraskevi Greek Orthodox Church, 18000 Behner Road in New Buffalo, MI. Greek Museum tours will also be available on these dates. By touring the museum, you can learn more about the history and customs of the Greeks who settled or vacationed in Berrien County.

A store in Athens, Greece, decorated for Christmas.
PHOTO BY CHRISTOPHER THOMOPOULOS

A long-established tradition in Greece, a nation tied to the sea, is the decoration of karavakia (small boats) with lights. This boat greets passengers arriving at the port of Port of Piraeus, Greece.
PHOTO BY ELAINE THOMOPOULOS

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OBITUARIES

Barbara Jean Foster
1938-2023

Barbara Jean Foster, 85, of Niles, died peacefully, Wednesday, November 29, 2023, in the comfort of her family's presence.

Her life began August 5, 1938 in Niles, Michigan, the oldest of four children born to Charles and Bernadine Maynard. She married Donald Luther Foster September 8, 1962 in Niles, Michigan. After sixty-one years of marriage, he preceded her in death in October of 2023.

Barbara was a devoted caretaker and back-up mom to her granddaughters and great granddaughters. She was always in the kitchen, specializing in broccoli soup and taking over for any major holidays making a plethora of food for her family. Her life revolved around her family, bringing happiness to everyone. She found joy in the simple life; from going to the grocery store, going out to eat, just bringing her family together was her goal in life. She used to take Morgan to K-mart just for the fun of it. She was a phenomenal dog-sitter and would call it a "vacation away from grandpa" she had several dogs of her own of whom she cherished.

Barbara will be greatly missed by family and friends. She is survived by one daughter, Kyle (Jeff) Lea of Buchanan; two granddaughters, Morgan (McCade) Reese of Niles, Alexandra (Brandon) Jerue of Galien; two great granddaughters, McKenna Reese, Mazlynn Reese; two brothers, Kirk Maynard of Thompsonville, Todd Maynard of Sturgis; one niece, Elizabeth (Buddy) Denmam of Sturgis; and one nephew, Michael Maynard of Sturgis.

In addition to her husband, she was preceded in death by her parents; one daughter, Kara Ann Foster; and one brother, Denny Maynard.

Barbara will be laid to rest with her beloved husband in a private family ceremony.

The family prefers contributions in memory of Barbara be made to the Galien Library, 302 North Clevland Avenue, Galien, Michigan 49113.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Wagner Family Funerals Pobocik Chapel, Three Oaks. Please share a memory or a message online at www.wagnercares.com.

David Lee Shipley
1867-2023

David Lee Shipley, 56, of New Buffalo, died Friday, December 1, 2023.

His life began June 12, 1967, in Shenandoah, Iowa, the middle of three children born to James and Wanita Shipley. He married Misty April 14, 2017 in New Buffalo, Michigan.

David will be greatly missed by family and friends. He is survived by his wife of six-years, Misty Shipley of New Buffalo; three daughters, Mary (Conner) Farr of New Mexico, Ashley (Jonathan) Penny of Arizona, Micah Shipley of Washington; three sons, Jesse (Lauren) Clark of Nebraska, Cody Shipley of Texas, Levi Shipley of Niles; several grandchildren; one sister, Shelli (John) Pike of Texas; one brother, Steve (Benedicte) Shipley of California; paternal grandparents, Bert and Fonda Shipley of Iowa; and a host of aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, and extended family.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

The family will observe a private remembrance.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Wagner Family Funerals Pobocik Chapel, Three Oaks. Please share a memory or a message online at www.wagnercares.com.

New Buffalo Times
LOCAL INTELLIGENCE
— SINCE 1942 —

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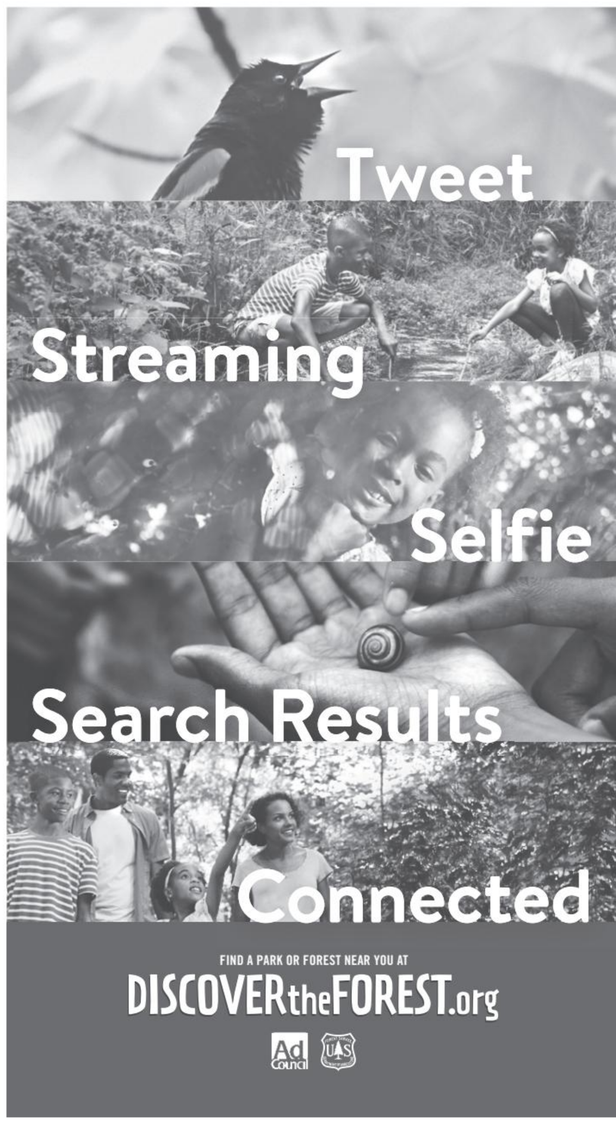

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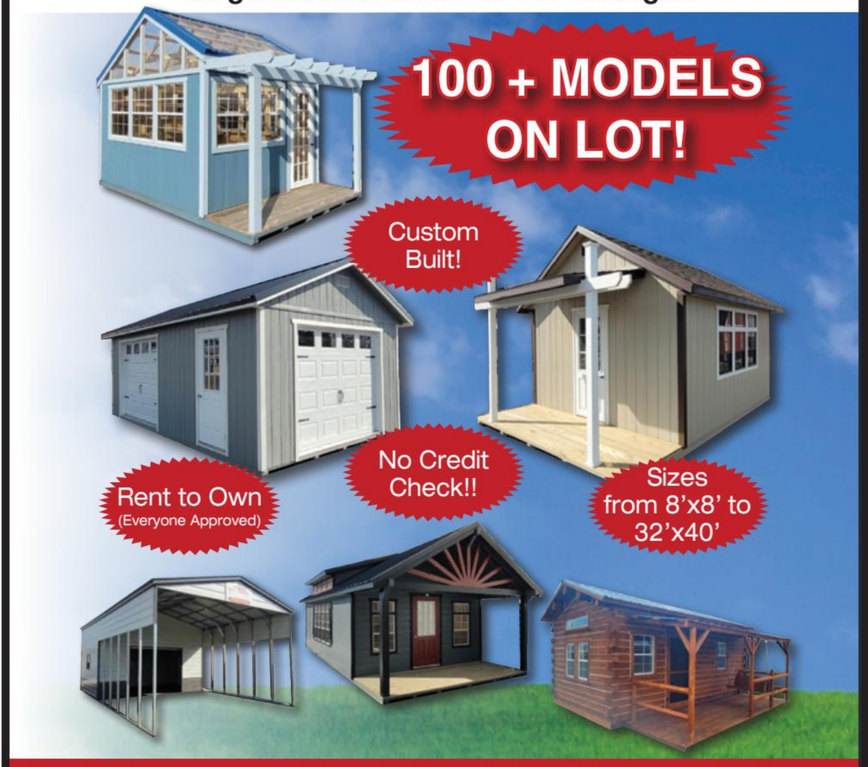

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